

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of

N. KOFUJI et al

Serial No.

Filed: August 3, 2001

For: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR FABRICATING
SEMICONDUCTOR DEVICES

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Prior to examination thereof, please amend the above-identified application as follows.

IN THE CLAIMS

Rewrite claims 3, 5 and 6 as follows:

3. (Amended) The method for fabricating semiconductor devices according to claim 1, further comprising, after said third step and before said fourth step, an etching process for removing predetermined part of said first insulating material layer by etching by means of plasma of a mixed gas containing NF_3 and Ar through an opening patterned in said second insulating material layer in said third step.

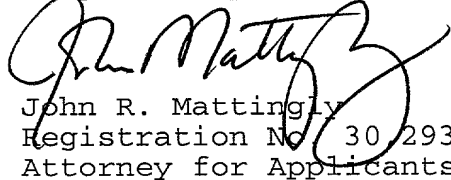
5. (Amended) The method for fabricating semiconductor devices according to claim 3, wherein said etching process is performed by setting the processing plasma pressure to below 0.5Pa.

6. (Amended) The method for fabricating semiconductor devices according to claim 3, further comprising, immediately after said etching process, a process for subjecting to said sample an O₂ or H₂ plasma processing.

REMARKS

Examination is requested.

Respectfully submitted,


John R. Mattingly
Registration No. 30,293
Attorney for Applicants

MATTINGLY, STANGER & MALUR
1800 Diagonal Road, Suite 370
Alexandria, Virginia 22301
(703) 684-1120
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MARKED UP VERSION OF REWRITTEN CLAIMS

3. (Amended) The method for fabricating semiconductor devices according to claim 1 [or 2], further comprising, after said third step and before said fourth step, an etching process for removing predetermined part of said first insulating material layer by etching by means of plasma of a mixed gas containing NF_3 and Ar through an opening patterned in said second insulating material layer in said third step.

5. (Amended) The method for fabricating semiconductor devices according to claim[s] 3 [or 4], wherein said etching process is performed by setting the processing plasma pressure to below 0.5Pa.

6. (Amended) The method for fabricating semiconductor devices according to [any one of] claim[s] 3 [to 5], further comprising, immediately after said etching process, a process for subjecting to said sample an O_2 or H_2 plasma processing.